

## Synod Council Minutes

December 13, 2025 – St. John, Findlay

### Welcome and Devotions

Call to Order – Time: 9:01am

**Devotion & Prayer** - led by: Vicar Jacinda Jones & Jack Brink

Jack Brink's devotion was, "We Are Lifted by Christ Daily."

Vicar Jacinda gave us her witness of her journey in her ministry as a SAM (Synod Authorized Minister).

### Roll Call: **x Present e Excused**

X Bishop Daniel Beaudoin  
X Nancy Yunker  
X Michelle Schaffer  
X Shea McGrew  
X Wendy Bauer  
e Caitlin Brink  
X Rev. Tucker O'Leary  
e Rev. Melanie Haack  
x Christine Reasoner  
x Kathy Jurrus  
x Rev. Melodi Hagen  
x Clark Price  
x Rev. Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri  
e Beth Kieffer  
x Deacon Carolyn Steinfeldt  
e Kevin Swagler  
x Jerusha Walker  
x Kelly Weber  
e Rodney West Estell

### Staff: **(check those in attendance)**

x Deacon Sherry Krieger  
x Rev. Sarah Schaaf  
e Cassie Mugler  
e Linda Henschen  
e Calla Gilson Burns  
e Cheryl Sondergeld  
e Jillian Russell

### Quorum Established:

X Yes

### Approval of the Agenda:

#### Proposed Amendment to the Agenda - Action SC25.17 Synod Treasurer Reappointment

"Synod Council reappoints Trent "Shea" McGrew to a four-year term as Treasurer (term ending 2029)."

A motion was made by Pastor Tucker O'Leary and seconded by Kathy Jurrus to approve the proposed amendment: Action SC25.17 Synod Treasurer Reappointment to the agenda. Motion was approved.

A motion was made by Pastor Melodi Hagen and seconded by Jerusha Walker to approve the agenda as amended. Motion was approved.

## **Approval of Synod Council Minutes: September 20, 2025:**

A motion was made by Kelly Weber and seconded by Christine Reasoner to approve the minutes of September 20, 2025. Motion was approved.

## **Review of Executive Committee Decisions:**

a. October 2, 2025

b. November 17, 2025

## **Bishop Daniel Teaching Time and Update:**

Bishop Daniel gave every council member the 2026 Daily Text Devotional and a copy of "Love Is The Way" written by Bishop Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church. Tools to be used during the year.

1 John is possibly an essay not a letter. It is a guide against crisis. Who wrote 1 John, possibly a follower of Jesus "John the Elder". Why 1 John matters and what does that mean for us today? Faith in Jesus is "Love".

This year is "The Way of Love", the bible verse is "We love because He first loved us." 1 John 4:19. There is a monthly devotional that focus on key passages from 1 John. There are other resources about "The Way of Love" that can be found on the synod website.

Jillian Russell will start on December 16 as the new Communication and Administrative Coordinator.

Dave Seitz to become new Business Manager.

## **Staff Updates:**

Pastor Sarah shared her experience on the Border Immersion Trip- Mexico Border Servant Corp. She gave an update about the Project PikiPiki in Tanzania, 40 evangelists will receive a pikpiki (motor bike) in December.

Northwestern Ohio Synod and Northeastern Ohio Synod will come together to celebrate leaders that completed the Growing in Faith series in January.

Deacon Sherry shared updates. Fresh Expressions, engaging leaders and creating hubs to support new communities of faith. They will use the Missional Journey with Fresh expressions United Kingdom and the Godsend Model.

"New Ministry Journey"- the NMJ is a team-based process that allows for flexible movement through the significant phases of work/discernment/prayerful deliberation/leadership/conversations/reflection/discision-making, etc. that leads our parishes into a new place after a pastoral leader has moved on.

## **Vice President's Report:**

Nancy Yunker reported that the vice-presidents continue to have their monthly Zoom meetings. They are in the process of putting together monthly topics. One of their discussions will be, how are we addressing the pastor shortage?

## **Synod Council Roster and Parish Actions:**

### **Action SC25.13 Appointment of Synod Authorized Ministers (SAM)**

“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the appointment of the following Synod Authorized Ministers to serve through December 31, 2026:

Paul Brooks St. Luke, North Baltimore and St. John, McComb, Eric Corns Sonfire by the River and Bethlehem, Pemberville, Tom Fleming St. Mark, Ada, Robert Frank St. John's, Rocky Ridge ,Alan Fuhrhop Bethlehem, Okolona, Brent Gardner Zion, Sandusky and Supply, Robert Glenn English, Bluffton, Jeannine Grimm Sunday Supply, Alex Heffelfinger St. John, Hicksville ,Jacinda Jones Findlay, Cooperative (St. John and Trinity, Findlay) , Beth Kieffer Grace, Castalia ,Hannah Mapus Zion, Gibsonburg, Jim Martin Faith, Toledo, Shea McGrew Hope, Bowling Green, Adam McIntosh St. John, Toledo, Mary Miller St. John, Celina and St. Paul, Northstar, Deaconess Helena Morris Christ, Continental and Maumee Valley Supply, Deb Noll St. Paul, Jenera, Maureen Pump St. Mark, Fremont, Jon Rhoades Zion, Waterville and St. Paul, Haskins, Clione Schneider Christ, Dowling ,Chris Staup First, Stryker, Michelle Theilen St. James, Toledo, Jerusha Walker Trinity, Galion, Donna Warren Trinity, Malinta, Frank Weaver Faith United, Toledo, Kelly Weber St. Peter, Ridgeville Corners & Def. Area Supply, Eliza Wertenberger Wabash Co-op, Deacon Jean Wise Williams County Parish

A motion was made by Kathy Jurrus and seconded by Pastor Tucker O'Leary to accept the appointment of the Synod Authorized Ministers presented to serve through December 31, 2026. Motion was approved.

### **Action SC25.14 Approval of On Leave**

“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the On Leave status of Rev. Rebecca West-Estell”.

A motion was made by Jerusha Walker and seconded by Pastor Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri to approve the On Leave status of Rev. Rebecca West-Estell. Motion was approved.

### **Action SC25.15 Renewal of SAWC Authorizations**

“Synod Council renews the authorization of the following Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities until December 31, 2026: Sonfire by the River in Pemberville, and Camino de Vida in Fremont.”

A motion was made by Pastor Tucker O'Leary and seconded by Shea McGrew to renew the authorization of Sonfire by the River in Pemberville and Camino de Vida in Fremont as Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities until December 31, 2026. Motion was approved.

### **Action SC25.16 Designation of Strategic Ministries**

“The Northwestern Ohio Synod designates that the following ministries will continue as strategic ministries in 2026: Salem Lutheran Church, Toledo and Redeemer Lutheran Church, Toledo.”

A motion was made by Shea McGrew and seconded by Deacon Carolyn Steinfeldt that Salem Lutheran Church, Toledo and Redeemer Lutheran Church, Toledo will continue as strategic ministries in 2026. Motion was approved.

### **Action SC25.17 Synod Council Treasurer Reappointment**

“Synod Council reappoints Trent “Shea” McGrew to a four-year term as Synod Council Treasurer (term ending 2029).”

A motion was made by Clark Price and seconded by Pastor Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri to reappoint Trent “Shea” McGrew to a four-year term as Synod Council Treasurer (term ending 2029).” Motion was approved.

## **Financial Reports**

- a. Financial Report – First Reading of the 2026-27 Mission Spending Plan. First reading of the proposed revised spending plan. Action will be taken at the January 2026 meeting.

Shea went over the Statement of Activities for those new to the council and explained the budget tracking.

## **Administrative Updates**

- a. Synod Constitution Amendments (2025)

At the Churchwide Assembly Synod Constitutions were updated with required changes.

## **For the Good of the Order/Announcements**

St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church, Norwalk will celebrate their 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on January 4, 2026. Bishop Daniel will preach that day.

Kelly Weber shared her SAM Appointment.

Shea shared his SAM Appointment.

Clark Price shared New Ministry events at St. John, Oak Harbor.

Pastor Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri shared her involvement with International Women in Ministry; they will have a Lent devotional "Grace Poured Out."

Pastor Sarah shared there is a Region 6 "Sermon Supply" list available.

Pastor Tucker O'Leary shared First Lutheran in Findlay will have "Stations of the Manager."

## **Closing/Sending Blessing**

**Adjournment – Time:** 11:48

A motion to adjourn was made by Pastor Ashly Rosa-Ruggieri and seconded by Shea McGrew. Motion was approved.

## **Future Meeting**

- a. January 31, 2026, Zoom
- b. April 25, 2026, St. Mark's, BG
- c. May 30, 2026, Synod Assembly at St. Mark's, BG
- d. September 19, 2026, Good Hope, Arlington
- e. December 12, 2026, St. Paul, Jenera